Architects recognize visual arts facility

WMU’s Richmond Center for Visual Arts has been named the winner of the 2008 Honor Award from the Detroit chapter of the American Institute of Architects. The award was announced at the group’s annual gala late last fall.

“The beauty and exceptional nature of the Richmond Center are apparent to those of us using the building, and it’s affirming that the architectural profession recognizes its grace, function and quality,” says Margaret Merrion, dean of the College of Fine Arts.

Praising the craftsmanship and attention to detail apparent in the structure, judges in the annual competition called the center “a strong structural and architectural form which accommodates a sense of movement and provides strong linkages to its surroundings.”

“It is truly an honor and privilege to receive an award for the design of the Richmond Center,” says Bob Varga of SmithGroup, principal designer of the facility. “The project is the designer of the facility. “The project

Key players in the Richmond Center project on hand for the Honor Award presentation included, from left, Chris Purdy, project manager; Bob Varga, principal designer; WMU Dean Margaret Merrion; and Russ Sykes, SmithGroup principal. (Photo courtesy of Detroit AIA chapter)

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Government reform expert employs research in Iraq

Matthew S. Mingus, public affairs and administration, will take a break from the classroom and put his knowledge to work by serving as an advisor to develop Iraqi local and provincial governments for the next year.

Mingus, a 2005-06 Fulbright Research Chair at the University of Ottawa’s Centre on Governance, will serve as a governance advisor for the U.S. Department of State in Iraq for 2009. He left Jan. 21 to start mandatory training in the Washington, D.C., area and should be on the ground in Iraq by mid-February. He expects to return to his campus teaching career in April 2010.

Mingus, a 10-year veteran of the WMU faculty and director of the School of Public Affairs and Administration, will take a yearlong unpaid leave to take a post with the embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team based at Camp Taji in Iraq. His fellow team members include U.S. Foreign Service officers and specialists in political affairs, governance, economic development, education, health, and the rule of law.

“I’ll return with a better understanding of world conflict, at the very least,” Mingus says. “I’m looking forward to a break from academia and particularly the chance to put some of my research ideas on democratic reform to the real-world test.”

Mingus says that his team’s purpose will be to develop a strong sense of local control and to help local officials advocate for their needs at the national level, through the develop-

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WMU faculty, staff take part in MLK Day activities

WMU faculty and staff were well-represented at area MLK National Day of Service activities this past Monday. The day’s participants included communication Professor Mark Orbe, center in ObamaZoo T-shirt, and WMU students, who volunteered at the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission. (Photo by Thom Myers)
Inauguration chance to promote government jobs

Crowds of more than 2,500, mostly students, came together at Miller Auditorium Jan. 20, to welcome Barack Obama’s historic inauguration the 44th U.S. president.

Career and Student Employment Services sponsored the opening of the auditorium for free viewing of live coverage of the momentous inauguration events and also staged a special WMU program for students.

The program was made possible through a grant from the Partnership for Public Service in Washington, D.C., which is allowing career services to promote federal employment as a career option for WMU students.

Numerous governmental careers and internships are available through such options as a career option for WMU students.

For more information, contact Career and Student Employment Services.

Exchange Services provided—House sitting, dog sitting, house cleaning, elder care (such as running errands and providing meals).

Available 24 hours a day, References available. Call 998-1349.

Jobs

Current job opportunities at WMU are announced daily on the Human Resources Web site at www.wmich.edu/hr/careers-at-wmu.htm. Please note that applications must be submitted online by the stated deadline. Complete application procedures are included with each posting.
Nearly $500,000 in energy costs avoided during winter recess

Building temperature setbacks and other measures taken during the winter recess helped the campus avoid nearly $484,440 in energy costs.

With the campus closed from noon Dec. 24 until Jan. 5, campus Physical Plant employees went to work dialing down thermostats campuswide. In some 70 percent of campus buildings—74 locations—the work could be done automatically, using a campus building automation system that includes 3,000 thermostats and 90,000 monitoring points.

Vice President Lowell Rinker, business and finance, says just two employees working in WMU’s state-of-the-art energy management center were able to work the system and accomplish the savings in automated areas.

In the remaining 30 percent of buildings, thermostats were manually adjusted and nonessential equipment shut down for the closure period.

Once students left in mid-December, temperatures in residence halls were set back to 62 degrees. Offices were dialed down to 55 degrees over the 12 days of closure, although in areas where ongoing research required higher temperatures, those adjustments were made.

Rinker says the University did not budget for the costs avoided, expecting the closure period to produce significant savings.

Since 1988, WMU’s budget plan has been to avoid these costs and thereby reinvest in additional cost-avoidance technology.

Traveling seminar helping to make workplaces around campus safer

Following the horrific shooting incident at Virginia Tech in April 2007, two staff members in the Department of Public Safety have been presenting a seminar to the campus community that addresses workplace violence and emergency preparedness.

Andrew Bachmann, police officer, and Cam Vossen, emergency management administrator, jointly present “WMU Emergency Preparedness” to requesting units and groups. The seminar usually lasts between 45 and 60 minutes. Their presentation includes an overview of WMU’s emergency plans, campus safety and personal preparedness information, a 20-minute video, a debriefing, and time for discussion and audience questions.

This learning approach will better prepare students for investment careers by allowing them to direct the fiduciary management of investment assets.

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The seminar was expanded this past July to include the video “Shots Fired: When Lightning Strikes,” which stresses developing a survival mindset and offers strategies for surviving an active-shooter situation.

Students to manage $500,000 foundation portfolio

A select group of students has been hired to manage a $500,000 portfolio of WMU Foundation funds and will gain remarkable hands-on experience in their major field of study.

The group will act as the large cap manager of the portfolio. Members of the student-managed investment fund competed for the opportunity by enrolling in an upper-level course in the Department of Finance and Commercial Law in the Haworth College of Business.

This learning approach will better prepare students for investment careers by allowing them to direct the fiduciary management of investment assets.

Students will manage the portfolio under the guidance of alumnus Len Harrison, a principal at LVM Capital and a chartered financial analyst, who is teaching the class. Decisions to buy, sell or hold will be made by a vote of the students, and fund performance will be reported each semester.

Board of Trustees grants numerous Sabbatical leaves

The WMU Board of Trustees granted sabbatical leaves for 36 faculty members at its Dec. 12 meeting.

Those granted sabbatical and their titles or academic units are: Leonard C. Ginsberg, associate vice president for research; Jon R. Adams, English; Julie Apker, communication; Sisay Asefa, economics; Robert J. Bensley, health, physical education and recreation; Peter Blickle, foreign languages; James M. Butterfield, political science; Vincent Desroches, foreign languages; Margaret H. Dupuis, English; Nancy Eimers, English; Charles R. Henderson, physics; Tricia Hennessy, art; Sarah Hill, anthropology; Jon D. Holtz- McCarthy, foreign languages; Daniel A. Guth, blindness and low vision studies; Ronald B. Larson, marketing; Steven N. Lipkin, communication; David Desroches, foreign languages; Nancy Eimers, English; G. Michael Grammer, geosciences; David A. Gath, blindness and low vision studies; Charles R. Henderson, physics; Tricia Hennessy, art; Sarah Hill, anthropology; Jon D. Holtzmann, anthropology; Chiayang James Hueng, economics; Katherine Julien, history; Steven Kohler, director of environmental studies; Tetyana S. Koshmanova, teaching, learning and languages; Margaret H. Dupuis, English; Nancy Eimers, English; G. Michael Grammer, geosciences; David A. Gath, blindness and low vision studies; Charles R. Henderson, physics; Tricia Hennessy, art; Sarah Hill, anthropology; Jon D. Holtzmann, anthropology; Chiayang James Hueng, economics; Katherine Julien, history; Steven Kohler, director of environmental studies; Tetyana S. Koshmanova, teaching, learning and languages; Ronald B. Larson, marketing; Steven N. Lipkin, communication; David M. Lynth, industrial and manufacturing engineering; Nilsouer Mackey, mathematics; Stephen B. Malcolm, biological sciences; Arthur R. McGunn, physics; Yirong Mo, chemistry; Jennifer Paltche, management; Dewei Qi, paper engineering, chemical engineering and imaging; Muhammed A. Razi, business information systems; David W. Rudge, biological sciences; Christopher J. Schmidt, geosciences; Wuwei Shen, computer science; Mary Ann Stark, nursing; Jeffrey Strom, mathematics; and Victor Cunrui Xiong, history.

Both Bachmann and Vossen stress that being involved in an active-shooter situation is similar to the chance of being struck by lightning during one’s lifetime—about 1 in 5,000. Importantly, they note, survival mindset strategies also can apply to fires, tornadoes and other more likely situations.

For more information or to schedule the seminar, contact Cam Vossen at cam.vossen@wmich.edu or 387-0678. Visit www.esem.wmich.edu for more information about WMU’s emergency preparedness, health and safety activities.

Aviation dean leaving academia

Aviation Dean David M. Powell is leaving the University for a position in the private sector, and the departure will trigger a nationwide search for his replacement.

Powell, who has led the College of Aviation since 2007, has accepted a position as chief operating officer with Flight Training Services International. A new interim leader for the college will be appointed soon.

Obituary

John “Jack” F. Shaw, celebrated track and field coach for 32 years, died Friday, Jan. 9, at Bronson Methodist Hospital in Kalamazoo. He was 70.

Shaw was inducted into the WMU Athletic Hall of Fame in 1997 after leading the Bronco men’s and women’s track and field team to six Mid-American Conference outdoor championships and five MAC cross country titles.

He joined the University in 1970, and during his career was named MAC Coach of the Year in outdoor track six times, five times in cross country and once for indoor track. A four-time recipient of the Central Collegiate Conference Coach of the Year award, in 1995 he also was named NCAA District IV Coach of the Year.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the WMU Foundation. Indicate in the memo section of the check that it is designated for the Jack Shaw Memorial Fund and mail to: WMU Foundation, 1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo MI 49008-5403.
On Campus with Karen Lamons

Karen Lamons knows first impressions can make a big difference—especially to new students moving into the residence halls. Study, social and sleep habits can make or break roommate relationships, and these tend to be the most frequent concerns Lamons deals with in her job as assignment supervisor for the Office of Residence Life. For the past two years, Lamons has worked to make roommate matches work smoothly so students live and study in a positive environment.

“I can’t imagine making someone live where they are completely unhappy. The most important thing is getting issues resolved so students can focus on what they come here for,” she says. “I tell all students the same thing—nothing is forever. There are always opportunities during the semester to make changes or move.”

Being a parent herself has helped Lamons relate to issues when families have concerns. She and her husband, Joe, have four children, a daughter who is a freshman at WMU and teenage triplets.

“They are a lot of parents. I can see their side of it and be sympathetic and a good listener,” Lamons says.

Issues arise year round, but the summer is the most chaotic because that’s when residence life receives housing contacts and fields thousands of calls. Students sometimes make her job more difficult by posting unflattering photos or content on Internet social networking communities like Facebook and My Space. She advises students to tone it down so others don’t jump to conclusions about their character.

“This generation tends to post their most outrageous photos,” Lamons says. “But if you have someone looking at your page who doesn’t know you, you’re going to be judged by those photos.”

A resident of Richland, Mich., Lamons grew up in the Richland and Comstock areas. Before coming to WMU, she worked as a paraprofessional for eight years at Gull Lake Community Schools. She also took time off to raise her family and attended the Bronson School of Nursing. Now she’s considering returning to school at WMU to earn her bachelor’s degree.

A self-professed “bleacher mom,” Lamons says she spends most of her free time traveling between her children’s sports practices and games. A favorite hobby of hers is knitting, a skill taught to her by another parent while warming the bleachers.

Nominations sought for employee, supervisor awards

Some 4,000 student workers at WMU and their supervisors will be recognized during Student Employee Appreciation Week, Monday through Friday, Feb. 16-20.

The observance pays tribute to WMU’s largest employee group for the many ways its members contribute to the University. This year’s theme is “Grab the Reins of Your Future.” Activities slated include announcement of the student employee and supervisor of the year.

Nominations are being accepted through Friday, March 6, for the Belleville Student Employee of the Year award and the student Supervisor of the Year award. The closing date is 5 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 19, in the Bernhard Center’s West Ballroom.

Career and Student Employment Services, which sponsors Employee Appreciation Week, encourages all faculty and staff members to submit nominations for the two awards and to thank their student workers in some way during this special appreciation week.

To go to www.wmich.edu/career and click “Nominate a Supervisor or Student for Employee Appreciation Week” to access the nomination forms. Go to www.wmich.edu/career/docs/seaw%202008%20certificate.doc to download a certificate-of-appreciation template that can be used to honor student employees.

Upon request, career services will provide small appreciation gifts, while supplies last, or a list of suggestions for ways to thank student workers. Gift requests must be received by Feb. 6.

For more information, or to obtain a gift request form or recognition ideas list, contact Brenda Case-Parris at brenda.case-parris@wmich.edu or 387-2745.

Student workers being hired

International Admissions and Services is now recruiting international student orientation leaders for fall 2009. This is an excellent opportunity for students to learn how to build cultural bridges and experience intercultural teamwork.

Leaders hired for the fall 2009 semester will also be eligible to work during the spring and summer I 2010 terms, as needed. They will work with a large group of newly admitted international students and must be available 24 hours per day during the program. Leaders are paid $500 for the fall 2009 orientation. The deadline to apply is 5 p.m. Monday, Feb. 9. Go to http://international.wmich.edu/content/section/0/177 for eligibility information and an application form.

Architects recognize

Continued from page 1

Represented a true collaboration between WMU and SmithGroup that resulted in an outstanding design solution that embodied the spirit and mission of the art school.”

Completed in 2007, the Richmond Center is a 44,000-square-foot structure that houses WMU’s Frostic School of Art and a variety of public exhibition spaces. It completes the West Campus arts village that consolidates WMU’s visual and performing arts. SmithGroup did the architectural work and CSM Group of Galesburg, Mich., was the construction management firm.